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ABSTRACT

Conducted in the hilly region of Israel in 1969, the purpose of this study was to examine the tendency to choose an industrial occupation among the sons of farmers through 3 viewpoints--the influence of the educational process and atmosphere; the social connotations, the status and prestige, of particular occupations; and the personal knowledge about an occupation and how a person obtained the information. The need for this research arose because of employment problems in areas where the economy is based on agriculture. The 95 participants (aged 20-22) were selected from 14 villages, made up of 40 to 50 families, located close to industrial enterprises. Questionnaires with closed and semi-open questions were administered in personal interviews, and interviews were conducted with plant managers, labor managers, and workers. The study determined that the measure of information which a person had on a chosen field influenced his attitude towards that occupation. A person with a limited knowledge about an occupation tended to display a negative approach towards the occupation. By contrast, the greater the knowledge about the occupation, the more positive the attitude. Persons receiving direct information from the plant or from a relative had a positive approach in contrast to an individual who received indirect information. Generally, the individuals interviewed displayed limited knowledge about the occupations, and this fact possibly explains why few people reach industrial work. (FF)

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# YOUNGSTERS IN THE HILLY REGION OF ISRAEL

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This is a summary of a research conducted in 1969 by Atara Kligman, a sociologist in the Settlement Department of the Jewish Agency, Israel.

## INTRODUCTION

A. The need for this research arose as a result of employment problems in the agricultural region of the Judean Mountains whose economy is based on agriculture. The form of settlement is a "cooperative village" based on equal distribution of the means of production; land, water, etc. The equality is in opportunities. The village contains modern marketing facilities. The community consists on the average of 45 families, constituting a cooperative association in the eyes of the law. The interrelationship is a kind of Gemeinshaft which displays close social interaction, mutual assistance and responsibility due to the mutual and compulsory agricultural services; supplies, marketing, local municipal ordinances. (General material pertaining to the Moshav, see Weintraub[1] and O. Shapiro.[2])

B. This hilly region lacks agricultural means of production. There is not enough arable land and the villages subsist mainly on chicken coops and fruit trees. Even in this area they are limited through a quota system of agricultural production which is programmed on a national scale. Lately it became apparent that agriculture is not capable of giving the people the proper standard of living. An additional problem is that of the maturing sons, from the age of 18 and over who are looking for employment to make a living. The norm in the village enables only one son to enter the family farm, first as a partner with his father and eventually he will receive the farm on his name. There is no housing and employment solution for the other sons.

The settlement in the area under survey was founded and is supported by national agencies and the planners of the settlement department are trying to find solutions in addition to agriculture in order to create additional sources of employment to the settlers and their children; one of these solutions is the establishment of industrial enterprises.

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C. During the period under study (1969), there existed four industrial enterprises in the field of metals. Two of these were small employing up to 15 workers, the third employs 60 workers, while the fourth can absorb up to 1500 workers in different aspects of metal work. This, in addition to two food processing plants; a slaughter-house for chickens, as well as a cooling plant which do not require skilled workers.

There exists also in the area a center for metallurgic training which offers a 10-month course and during which period the students receive a salary.

The problem of this research is: There are hundreds of young people in the villages of the region, who have no possibility of making a living from agriculture due to natural limitations of the area; they do not go to work in the industrial enterprises and who do not learn a trade. I tried to find out why they don't want to learn a trade, the reasons why they don't work in the existing enterprises(and due to this fact these places suffer from periodic lack of personnel) and which factors would tend to attract them to industry.

## THEORETICAL BASE

In sociological works which examined the topic "choice of occupation" by young people, two main factors are recognizable:

A. The approach in research -- mainly American --- (Glenn Alston[3], 1968; A. Lee[4], 1963; Gasson, 1968[5], Tousky, '67[6]; Kohn. 1969[7]), is to create an occupational-rote on the base of interviews with segments of the population or questionnaires through polls. in these researches appear a scale of occupations according to prestige, efforts of achievement and similar facts in a given period of time; it resembles closely facts gathered in statistical research, since the scales of occupations represented in them doesn't reflect the process of causes which are behind the choice of occupation of the person being interviewed.

B. The psychological-sociological approach of White, 1968[8]; A. Ginzburg, 1959[9], which look for the causes behind the choice of trades and see in this chocie part of the living process and development of the individual, part of the search of the self Individual identity. On the other hand, the choice is also affected by the family, the educational and vocational atmosphere in which he grew up and also the social implications (status and prestige) of the chosen field.

C. More specific works deal with the occupational choice of farm youngsters (Gasson, 1968[5]; Beegle & Hannan[10]; Weintraub and others 1971. Here the emphasis is placed not only on the statistical scale of the occupational choice but also the background for the choice. In the works of Weintraub it was found that a characteristic number for occupational choices is due to (1) occupational modernization; the farm youngsters under study, chose a high percentage of trades which require technical and academic occupational know-how; (2) productivity. A very small percentage chose commerce or white-collar work. A third chose farming, and a third chose technical trades. (3) Education constitutes an important factor in the choice of occupation and also in the possibility to be actually employed therein. In a general sense the model experiment carried out in a new immigrant village in Israel, a flexible population, ready for change, with a high potential for integration in a modern society.

The present research tries to find, on the basis of the previous studies mentioned above, the factors which influence the tendency for a particular occupation, professional work in industry which is a typical sign of modern society, among a specific population: farm youngsters who live in villages in which exist still the traditional society subject to a changing process. The approach in this research tends to find the causes connected with environment, education, evaluation of status and the creation of an attitude toward a specific industrial trade. An important fact which was explored in this connection is the amount of information available on the topic and the communication facilities through which this information reaches the population under study.

## The Population under study and the method of work

The population in the villages under study consists of units of forty to fifty families in each village. The average family size is 6.5 people. The countries of origin are Kurdistan, Yemen and India. In each village the population is homogeneous. These people reached Israel during the years 1950-56. In their countries of origin, most of them were merchants or craftsmen. However, in Israel they were transformed into farmers. (For a general background of the moshav see O. Shapiro, 1969[2].)

The sample research comprises 14 villages, located close to the industrial enterprises in the area. In these villages lives a population of about 300 adolescents in the age bracket of 18-26, from them we chose a sample of 95 youngsters.

The interviewed sample offered the following average facts:

Age bracket 20-22.

Education: 50% had primary schooling of 8 years while the other 50% had secondary education (2 or 3 years of secondary vocational or academic schooling).

Family status: Close to 80% were bachelors. 17% married, parents of children, and owned their own farms.

Employment: 25% worked in industry, about 50% worked in the village or on their parents farms in seasonal work, while 20% do not work.

Countries of Origin: Most of the youngsters came to Israel during the age of 0-5 with their parents. A small portion of them were born in Israel. Consequently, all of them have received their primary education in Israel.

The participants in the sample were interviewed through personal questionnaires, which included closed questions as well as semi-open questions; interviews were also conducted with the plant managers in the area, labor managers in these plants as well as the workers. The facts, represented in absolute numbers and in percentage, were checked thoroughly and were found accurate within the margin of 05 by probability tests

## The Hypothesis for the Research

The problem of attitude towards working in industry was examined from three theoretical aspects:

1. The transition from farming to industry involves changes in various areas of working conditions, opinions, norms and even values. In reality, the farmer who chooses an industrial trade must be ready for a general change. In the studies of Weintraub & T. Fortress (1971[12]) on the types of occupational choices among farm youngsters in Israel, the approach of the youngsters to the scales of occupational values was examined, in connection

with a negative or positive orientation towards a change. It was discovered that there exists among them a general tendency to change; their social stratification is not rigid, and is found in direct relation to the process of social modernization. Among them exist open social flexible and variable patterns. In an additional work, Weintraub & Ben Zimra (ibid., 1971) it was found that the educational level influences on the occupational choice among farm youngsters. On this base I supposed, that the higher the educational level, the greater tendency towards technical-industrial work among the researched group. I included in this supposition those who had opportunities to obtain an education outside of the house, including the period of national service, draft, which constitutes in Israel also a certain educational frame. On the other hand I supposed that the young adolescent who have only a primary education, and have received no education outside of the house, will prefer to choose farming as an occupation and not industry (more on education and occupational mobility see Vinson 1968[12]; Anderson-Western 1968[13] who have examined this topic in Australia.)

2. Occupational choice is influenced by status and prestige considerations. This fact recurs in many European and American studies such as Lee[4], Hannon-Beegle, 1969[10]; Hallpike, A Village In Ethiopia, 1968[16]; Davis-Moor 1945. This point is connected with the first supposition: Consequently, it was found that educational differences or the level of necessary training required to fulfill a job, are of a high correlation with the prestige of the trade, and with the functional importance of the assignment.

I have examined in this study the point whether the interviewees see differences in status between an industrial worker and a farmer, and if such consideration will influence them in their choice of an industrial trade. In the aforementioned study of Weintraub & Ben Zimra[11] it was found that among the motivation for occupational preference were: comfort and "clean" work, independence and mobility, high income and economic security. These considerations are more proper for farming as an occupational choice than for work in industry. It would indeed be possible to suppose that due to these reasons industry will enjoy a lower status. This in complement to ideological reasons such as national needs tend to give to agriculture a preferential status in the latter of prestige in Israel. (In clear contrast to other countries wherein blue collar workers prefer, from the point of view of prestige, to that of farmers. See Beegle-Hannan, 1960[10].) In this

connection, I tried to find out also what is the image of industry among those interviewed, in contrast to the image of farming as an occupation, and what is their motivation for these occupational employments.

3. I checked, to what measure, knowledge and the channels of communication tend to influence the approach towards industrial work. The studies of Svenning Rogers 1968[16], Holder 1967[17], Keller 1968[18], Robinson Brewer 1968[19], Congelosi 1967[20] and others, examine and show the connection between the formulation of an opinion and the approach towards a specific topic, between the amount of knowledge of the man on this topic, and the communication net through which this information reached the interviewed person. Also the occupational scale in the value frame of reference, is a result of the amount of knowledge of the man concerning the occupation. Luepton, 1968[21] claims "A need as an Achievement, operates to produce goal-directed behavior only when situations are known and defined as goals by relevant value-orientations. (p. 316, Sociometry, Sept. 68). I assumed that a negative approach towards industrial work tend to develop as a result of the lack of sufficient knowledge about the industrial premises.

In connection with all the aforementioned hypothesis all the following variables were examined:

1. Practical experience in industrial work.
2. Education and place of study.
3. National service (draft).
4. Pay level in the present job.
5. Family status and dwelling place.
6. Age.
7. The economic situation of the parents farm.
8. Country of origin of the family.

## Findings

1. In respect to the first supposition, which assumed a connection between readiness to work in industry, positive discoveries were made. The supposition was generally accepted. The highest percentage of those interested in industrial occupation, exists among the interviewed group which had secondary education, obtained outside of the house also with the national service frame, and they were relatively young.

The lowest percentage tending towards industry exists among those who had only primary education and were older. In this connection we also explored the ethnic origins and it was found that there is no clear cut connection between land of origins and the willingness to work in industry or between land of origin and the educational level.

2. The second supposition examined the problem of the status differences between the farming occupation and industrial occupation. We also tried to determine the image of "farming" as an occupation as opposed to that of "industry".

It was found that among half the interviewed there does not exist consciously, a difference in status between the farmer and the industrial worker. The discoveries verify the discovery of Weintraub[11] in the aforementioned studies and also the opinions of Beegle, Hannan[10] (op. cit.). According to them, a traditional society which undergoes a quick transformation, doesn't readily accept the theory of stratification prevalent in a modern industrial society. In addition to Israel: Greece, Brazil, Ceylon, Egypt and the Gold Coast. These are developing countries which are being transformed from semi-traditional societies to modern societies.

Among those interviewed, half displayed almost an equal proportion between those who prefer the status of a farmer to those who prefer the status of an industrial worker. In this group a connection was found between the economic situation of the family and the evaluation of status; married males, whose economic status is average or lower, appreciate more the industrial worker than the farmer, but bachelors whose economic situation is above average or good, value more the farmer.

In this connection we discovered a number of causes which influence the valuation of status and motivation towards industry as a trade.

a. Team-work which enables to make connections with people from a different (neighborhood) background than the one known to the interviewees.

b. Interest and challenge in the work with high demands for success.

c. A permanent salary and the possibility of occupational and financial promotion.

The factors which negated these people from engaging in industrial work in the area were:

a. Low beginners wage.

b. Transportation difficulties characteristic of a hilly area.

c. The limitation on time; the permanent fixed hours which do not allow for aiding on the family farm.

Farming on the other hand, appears as an "easy" comfortable occupation, allowing for independence, independent use of leisure time and proximity to house. The income factor is ambivalent in connection to the two occupations. In farming with high investment there are prospects for high profits, but there is also the fear of loss. In industry, there are no high profits for the worker but one receives a fixed monthly salary. These discoveries partially fit the discoveries of Weintraub & Ben Zimra[11] in the aforementioned work, in which the factors of comfort, income and economic security and independence, connect with the choice of farming as an occupation -- and the factors of mobility, achievement and interest in work connect with the choice in technical occupations.

3. The third supposition examined the connection between knowledge, the channels of information -- about industry -- and the attitude about the occupation. Their acknowledgement was examined about the (1) ownership of the enterprises in the area; (2) their measure of economic success; (3) salary and advancement; (4) details about the occupational-training center.

The findings confirmed the supposition. A connection was found between the amount of information and the attitude: It was found that there is a general lack of knowledge in respect to all subjects. There were difference in knowledge between topic and topic which stemmed mainly from the type of the channels of information. However, in general, between 60% to 80% of those interviewed did not know details on each one of the subjects. The greater the lack of knowledge about the more negative approach to industry, the prestige of an industrial worker is lower and there is less will to learn an industrial trade.

The network of communication which reports information concerning industry is of different levels: a) direct communcation from the industrial plant; b) indirect communication which works through the people of the village or the secretariat of the village; c) indirect and informal, through friends, relatives, family. The plants have no written or oral advertisements or any other mass media.

It was found that the more direct the communication between the plant and the individual the more exact it was and the more positive the approach towards industrial occupation. Practically, people working in the

industrial plant and people whose relatives work in the plant, knew more about the occupation and gave it more prestige from those people who heard about the plant indirectly. Moreover, the villager, lacking in knowledge about the plant tend to be most critical about industry. This was also found among those who did not know anyone working in the plants.

## Summary

This research examined the tendency to choose an industrial occupation among the sons of farmers through three viewpoints. Subject to the theories of White (1968)[8] and others, this study establishes that an occupational choice constitutes an integral part of the educational process, influenced by the environment and educational atmosphere as well as the social conotations of the occupation, that is to say, its status and prestige. In the light of communication studies by Svenning (1968)[16x] Holder (1967)[x17] and others, this study establishes that approaches personal psoitions towards an occupation, is influenced to a large degree through the measure of knowledge which the man possesses about the occupation as well as through the means of communication through which he gained knowledge of this occupation.

In comparison to studies made in Ireland (Beegle and other 1969[x10]) and in Israel Weintraub and other (1971[11x]) similar as well as different discoveries were found. Similar to other researches, also here it was discovered that education is of tremendous influence in the choice of an industrial occupation. Among the group interviewed constituting equally primary and secondary education, those whose educational level was higher invariably chose an industrial occupation and prefer it to agriculture. It also became clear here that farm youth are not conscious to the differences in status between the farmer and the industrial worker. Generally, though they prefer agriculture as an occupation offering a specific image as opposed to industry. Agriculture has the image of an occupation which is easy, flexible from the point of time, close to the house, independence. By contrast, industry's image is one of limitations from the point of view of time, lack of independence, but whose advantages are challenging and occupational interest, achievements and economic security.

The finding whose implciation is most important is in conjunction with the theories of communication; the measure of information which a person has on a chosen field influences his attitude towards that occupation. Among those interviewed, the ones who had a limited knowledge about the occupation, tend to

display a negative approach towards the occupation, By contrast, the greater the knowledge about the occupation the more positive the attitude. Moreover, of those interviewed, the ones who received direct information either through the plant or through a relative working in the plant, the greater his knowledge and positive approach. However, those received their information in an indirect form, received very little knowledge and developed a negative outlook towards industry. Generally, among those interviewed there was very limited knowledge about the occupation and this fact may possibly explain that in the region, where there is an objective need for the establishment of industry which requires manpower there are so few people who reach industrial work.

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